



# Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road  
Groton, CT 06340-4394  
Town Clerk (860)441-6640  
Town Manager  
(860)441-6630

## Meeting Minutes

### Town Council

**Mayor Harry A. Watson, Councilors Peter J. Bartinik, Jr., Heather Sherman Bond, Catherine Kolnaski, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., John F. Scott, Paulann H. Sheets, James L. Streeter, and Elissa T. Wright.**

**Tuesday, August 1, 2006**

**7:30 PM**

**Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1**

#### REGULAR MEETING

#### **I. ROLL CALL**

*The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Harry Watson.*

*Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Office Assistant Elga Concepcion.*

*Members Present: Mayor Watson, Councilor Bartinik, Jr., Councilor Bond, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Scott, Councilor Sheets, Councilor Streeter and Councilor Wright*

#### **II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

*The Salute to the Flag was led by Mr. Jim Musante.*

#### **III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS**

*None.*

#### **IV. CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS**

*Ralph Whitney, 52 Division Street, who was in Revolutionary War costume, invited viewers to the 225th anniversary of the Burning of New London and the Battle of Groton Heights on September 2 and 3. Planned activities will include simulated battles, a picnic, and dancing. This event is being held to educate the younger generation and honor those who sacrificed their lives.*

*Jim Musante, 195 Seneca Drive, discussed water and sewer lines on Flanders Road. He feels that more land is needed for economic development in order to stabilize taxes. The land that is dedicated to economic development must be served by water and sewer so that it may be marketable to businesses. Mr. Musante discussed sources of tax revenue.*

#### **V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS**

*Responding to Mr. Whitney's presentation, Councilor Sheets thanked him for coming and wearing his uniform.*

*Responding to Mr. Musante's comments, Councilor O'Beirne stated that bringing more industries into Town will lead to an increase in taxes over a short period of time.*

#### **VI. CONSENT CALENDAR**

##### **a. Approval of Minutes**

**2006-0216 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)**

**RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of July 18, 2006 are hereby accepted and approved.

**This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.**

##### **b. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List**

**2006-0204 Steamboat Wharf Cleaning**

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

**2006-0214 Police Union Working Agreement**

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

**2006-0215 Supplemental Appropriation for the Revaluation Fund**

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

**c. Special Trust Fund Contributions****2006-0210 Special Trust Fund Contributions****RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS**

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts contributions to the Town as follows:

Marlene Terry Ziegler - \$100.00 - Library Discretionary  
Various Donations - \$350.00 - Maritime Academy  
Fort Hill Pharmacy - \$100.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving  
Jean Simpson - \$30.00 - Social Services Discretionary

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

**Passed The Consent Calendar**

A motion was made by Councilor Scott, seconded by Councilor Bartinik, Jr., to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried unanimously

**VII. COMMUNICATION REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)****a. Town Councilors**

*Several Councilors attended the Permanent School Building Committee meeting and presentation on July 20. Councilors also attended the retirement celebration for City of Groton Director of Parks and Recreation William Sanford on July 29.*

*Councilor Kolnaski stated that New London City Manager Richard Brown did an excellent job while serving on the Ledge Light Health District Board of Directors.*

*Councilor Bartinik received a phone call from a retired police officer regarding the matter of identification cards.*

*Councilor Bond received a phone call concerning the sewer and water extension at Flanders Road. She received emails regarding the Council exploring the idea of a tax relief program for the elderly.*

*Councilor Wright received an email regarding buses on Pearl Street in Noank.*

**2006-0222 Elderly Tax Freeze Legislation****ELDERLY TAX FREEZE LEGISLATION****Referred**

*Councilor Wright requested a referral be submitted to the Committee of the Whole (COW) concerning an additional tax relief program for the elderly and cited Public Act No. 06-176 which was passed by the State Legislature in 2006.*

*Councilor Streeter discussed concerns which include liability related to the issuance of identification cards. He noted that this type of card allows an individual to carry a weapon.*

2006-0223

**Town Council E-Mail Accounts**

## TOWN COUNCIL E-MAIL ACCOUNTS

**Referred**

*Councilor Sheets requested a new referral be submitted to the COW concerning Town Councilors having Town email addresses.*

*Mayor Watson spoke with Groton City Mayor Popp regarding changing the City/Town joint meeting date from August 8 to September 12 so that the consultant may complete his Thames Street project presentation.*

*The Mayor received consensus from the Town Council to cancel the COW, but hold the Group II meeting at the Senior Center on August 8.*

*The Mayor will be meeting with a Japanese exchange student who will be communicating a message from her Mayor in Japan.*

**b. Representative Town Meeting**

*Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox stated that the RTM did not meet last month but is scheduled to meet on August 9.*

**c. Clerk of the Council**

*The Town Clerk reminded viewers that Citizenship Day is scheduled for September 18 and that the Democratic Primary will be held on August 8.*

*She discussed the formation of the Ad-Hoc School Redistricting Committee and stated that this committee is working on a plan which will be fair to everyone. The committee has spoken with Town Planner Mike Murphy and a consultant regarding redistricting issues. Town Clerk Tarbox discussed the busing of students and related costs and concerns. It will be presenting a recommendation to the Board of Education by late Fall.*

*She received a letter from Councilor Sheets with an enclosed donation in the amount of \$2,605 for the Social Services Discretionary fund. Councilor Sheets noted in her correspondence that she was making this donation in lieu of the tax difference she would have paid if the 2005 revaluation had not been postponed.*

**d. Town Manager**

*Town Manager Mark Oefinger reassured residents that the hours of the Senior Center could be extended in light of the high temperatures.*

*The Town Manager's office received a copy of the Noank Hatchery lease. He suggested a special COW meeting be held before the next Town Council meeting.*

2006-0224

**Potential Land Acquisition - Fort Rachel**

## POTENTIAL LAND ACQUISITION - FORT RACHEL

**Referred**

*At the request of the Town Manager, Mayor Watson made a referral to the Community & Cultural Development Committee concerning the Town acquiring ownership of Fort Rachel.*

2006-0221

**Groton Ambulance Building Expansion**

## GROTON AMBULANCE BUILDING EXPANSION

**Referred**

*At the request of the Town Manager, Mayor Watson made a referral to the Committee of the Whole concerning the expansion of the Groton Ambulance facilities.*

*Mr. Oefinger noted that on August 10 there will be a formal farewell celebration for former New London City Manager Richard Brown.*

**e. Town Attorney**

*No report.*

**VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Mayor Watson noted that Councilor O'Beirne is now chairperson of the Community & Cultural Development Committee and that Councilor Scott is chairperson of the Personnel/Appointments/Rules Committee.*

**a. Community & Cultural Development - Chairman O'Beirne**

*No meeting; no report.*

**b. Economic Development - Chairman Bond**

*No meeting; no report.*

**c. Education/Health & Social Services - Chairman Kolnaski**

*No meeting; no report.*

**d. Environment & Recreation - Chairman Sheets**

*No meeting; no report.*

**e. Finance - Chairman Wright**

*No meeting; no report.*

**f. Personnel/Appointments/Rules - Chairman Scott**

*No meeting; no report.*

**g. Public Safety - Chairman Streeter**

*No meeting; no report.*

**h. Public Works - Chairman Bartinik**

*No meeting; no report.*

**i. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Watson**

*The Committee of the Whole (COW) met on July 25 and the items on tonight's agenda are a result of that meeting.*

**IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

*Councilor Streeter requested that the subject of the Groton Historical Society be placed on the next COW agenda for discussion.*

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

**2006-0204 Steamboat Wharf Cleaning**

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING SEDIMENT REMOVAL AT STEAMBOAT WHARF**

WHEREAS, the Town Council and RTM previously appropriated \$21,000 for sediment removal adjacent to Steamboat Wharf in the Mystic River by using a land-based vacuum truck, in compliance with the then-current permit from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, and

WHEREAS, vacuum truck operations in 2006 have been unable to reach and remove a major portion of the sediment, and

WHEREAS, the Town has been advised that dredging of the Steamboat Wharf area may be able to be done in conjunction with a large dredging project that is scheduled to take place elsewhere on

the Mystic River, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves use of the remaining \$13,800 of the \$21,000 appropriated for sediment removal, toward the cost of such dredging services as may be allowed by DEP.

**A motion was made by Councilor Bartinik, Jr., seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted.**

*Responding to Councilor Sheets, Town Manager Oefinger stated that the Town has been trying to find a permanent solution to the removal of sediment build-up.*

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2006-0214**

**Police Union Working Agreement**

**POLICE UNION WORKING AGREEMENT**

WHEREAS, the Town and the union have concluded negotiations for a three-year contract, which shall be retroactive to an effective date of July 1, 2005, and end on June 30, 2008, to establish benefits, compensation and terms of employment for the Groton Police Union, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Groton Town Council hereby approves the expenditure of funds necessary to implement the agreement between the Town of Groton and the Groton Police Union, Local #3428, for the period July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2008.

**A motion was made by Councilor Scott, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Adopted.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2006-0215**

**Supplemental Appropriation for the Revaluation Fund**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN FYE 2007 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION FOR THE REVALUATION FUND**

WHEREAS, the Town Council elected to exercise the local option provided by CGS 12-621 and postponed the 2005 revaluation until October 2006, and

WHEREAS, the contract signed with the revaluation company, Tyler/CLT, on May 17, 2006 did not include the field review of all real estate parcels, as we had performed that task during the 2005 revaluation process, and

WHEREAS, an appropriation of \$179,475 was approved for the Revaluation Fund by the Town Council and Representative Town Meeting during the FYE 2007 budgetary deliberations for the 2006 revaluation, and

WHEREAS, recent state legislation now requires that a field review be conducted and as defined by the new law requires the examination of each parcel of real property by a review appraiser in its neighborhood setting, and

WHEREAS, in order to be in compliance with state law, staff requested and Tyler/CLT provided information that the new legislation would increase the cost of the 2006 revaluation by \$27,400, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that an FYE 2007 supplemental appropriation of \$27,400 from the Revaluation Funds' fund balance be approved for the Revaluation Fund and referred to the Representative Town Meeting.

**A motion was made by Councilor Sheets, seconded by Councilor Scott, that this matter be Adopted and Referred to the Representative Town Meeting.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**XI. OTHER BUSINESS**

*None.*

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. was made by Councilor Kolnaski , seconded by Councilor Sheets and so voted unanimously.*

*Attest:*

*Barbara Tarbox, Town Clerk*

*Elga Concepcion  
Office Assistant*